

CITY AUDITOR'S OFFICE



AUDIT OF CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS DIVISION

Report No. CAO 1601-0102-07

November 30, 2001

**RADFORD K. SNELDING, CPA, CIA, CFE
CITY AUDITOR**



MAYOR
OSCAR B. GOODMAN

CITY COUNCIL
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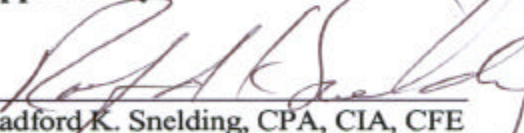
**Subject: Audit of Cultural and Community Affairs Division
 (CAO 1601-0102-07)**

Attached please find the report mentioned above.

Prepared by:


Philip Cheng
Sr. Internal Auditor

Approved by:


Radford K. Snelding, CPA, CIA, CFE
City Auditor

CITY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

CITY AUDITOR
RADFORD K. SNELDING
CIA, CPA, CFE

CITY OF LAS VEGAS
400 STEWART AVENUE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89101

VOICE 702.229.2472
FAX 702.386.9252
TDD 702.386.9108
www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AUDIT OF CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS DIVISION REPORT CAO 1601-0102-07

The purpose of the executive summary is to convey in capsule form the significant issues of the report. The executive summary is a vehicle for reviewing the report and should be used in conjunction with the entire report.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural and Community Affairs (the Cultural Division) is responsible for organizing a variety of cultural programs including visual and performing arts, training classes, and festivals. It operates the following cultural and arts centers: Reed Whipple, Charleston Heights, and West Las Vegas. It also coordinates cultural activities at these centers and other city facilities.

The Cultural Division has a total of 49 administrative and support staff. In addition to the full-time staff, the Division employs approximately 70 part-time instructors to teach various cultural and arts classes throughout the year. In fiscal year 2000, the Division had an operating budget of approximately \$3.48 million.

OVERVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

We believe the Cultural Division is generally performing its duties and responsibilities adequately and effectively. Our audit identified issues management should address to further improve efficiency, effectiveness, and internal controls over operations. Management should:

- Establish cost recovery targets for all cultural programs and monitor the financial performance of each program.
- Strengthen cash controls over ticket sales to ensure proper accounting for ticket revenues.
- Establish controls to ensure all cultural events and programs are evaluated on a timely basis.
- Conduct a customer needs assessment to ensure optimal public use of the City's arts and cultural centers.
- Re-evaluate and modify the methodology used in tracking art gallery attendance.
- Establish a formal volunteer program and utilize volunteers for non-essential tasks to defray programming costs.

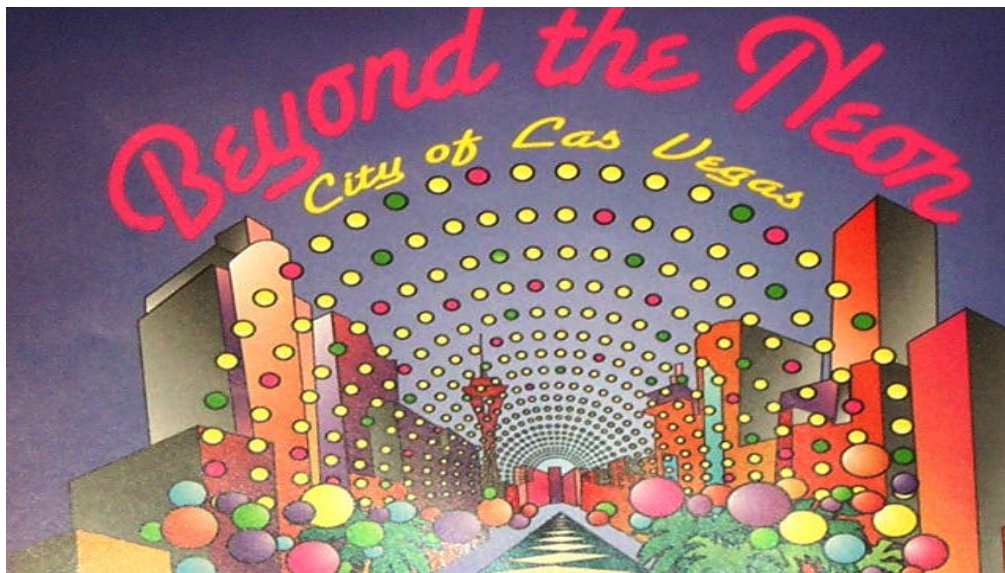
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AUDIT OF CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS REPORT CAO 1601-0102-07

BACKGROUND

Cultural and Community Affairs (the Cultural Division) is responsible for organizing a variety of cultural programs including visual and performing arts, training classes, and festivals. It operates the following cultural and arts centers: Reed Whipple, Charleston Heights, and West Las Vegas. It also coordinates cultural activities at these centers and other city facilities.

The Cultural Division has a total of 49 administrative and support staff. In addition to the full-time staff, the Division employs approximately 70 part-time instructors to teach various cultural and arts classes throughout the year. In fiscal year 2000, the Division had an operating budget of approximately \$3.48 million.



OBJECTIVES

The objectives of our audit were to determine whether:

- Management controls are adequate to accomplish the Division's mission, and
- Financial controls are adequate to ensure economy of operations.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Fieldwork was performed in accordance with generally accepted governmental auditing standards. Procedures included:

- Observing operations and ongoing activities;
- Interviewing management and program staff;
- Reviewing policies and procedures;
- Examining operating records; and
- Analyzing financial and operational statistics.

CONCLUSIONS/FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Auditor's Office appreciates the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by city employees during the audit. We believe the Cultural Division is generally performing its duties and responsibilities adequately and effectively. Our audit identified issues management should address to further improve efficiency, effectiveness, and internal controls over operations. These issues are summarized in the following sections. While other issues were identified and discussed with management, they were deemed less significant for reporting purposes.

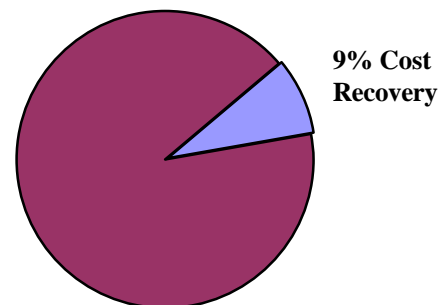
1. COST RECOVERY

CRITERIA:

- Successful management of an organization requires that sound financial performance measures be established, documented, and communicated to staff.
- Once financial performance measures are established, an organization's operations must be aligned with the business and personnel held accountable to these performance measures.

CONDITION:

- According to the City's fiscal year 2000 financial statements, annual expenditures for the Cultural Division were \$3.48 million, including \$2.44 million for salary, wages, and benefits.
- During the same year, the Division had \$316,555 in revenues, including \$36,259 from grants and donations.
- Therefore, the Division's overall cost recovery rate is 9% (\$316,555/\$3.48 million).



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- The Division excludes most of its operating costs (i.e., full-time administrative and support staff) when calculating cost recovery rates for its programs.
- Only discretionary expenditures directly related to the programs (i.e., instructor fees, supplies) are considered in evaluating cost recovery.

EFFECT:

- Poor programming decisions are being made based on partial financial information.
- Lack of accountability for most of the Cultural Division's operating expenditures.

CAUSE:

- Lack of direction by City and Leisure Services management.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. City and Leisure Services management should establish cost recovery targets for the Cultural Division based on its total operating costs.
2. Cultural Division management should establish an action plan to determine, monitor, and report cost recovery rates for their cultural and arts programs.
3. The following revenue enhancing and cost cutting measures should be considered to improve the Division's cost recovery:
 - a) Increase program attendance;
 - b) Raise fees for well attended programs;
 - c) Adopt more aggressive fundraising activities through grant applications, corporate sponsors, and donations from public;
 - d) Improve promotional and marketing methodology;
 - e) Eliminate unnecessary administrative and overhead costs; and
 - f) Use increased number of volunteers.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

See page 16

2. BOX OFFICE CASH CONTROLS

CRITERIA:

- Proper cash controls help ensure cash is safeguarded, accounted for, and reconciled.

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CONDITION:

- The Cultural Division has box offices at the Charleston Heights Arts Center and the Reed Whipple Cultural Center.
- Each box office is staffed with a full-time cashier to sell the Division's event tickets during the hours when the center is open. If the cashier is not on duty, customers can purchase tickets from other center staff.
- Event tickets are pre-printed with pricing options such as adult/children and advance/door prices. Each ticket consists of three portions. The cashier keeps the bottom portion. The customer receives the top two portions and returns the top portion for admittance to the event. Our review indicated the following control deficiencies:
 - Cashiers use a pencil to circle the price on the tickets. As such, the customers could change the pricing option from a child ticket to an adult ticket. The pricing option on the ticket could also be manipulated by a cashier to under-report sales revenue. In fact, we identified several tickets that had more than one price option circled.
 - After each event, the number of unsold tickets is "plugged" to balance to the total number of printed tickets instead of accounting for the unsold tickets.
 - In one incident, we found that 17 unsold tickets could not be accounted for.

EFFECT:

- Potential loss of revenue.
- Potential fraud.

CAUSE:

- Lack of adequate controls in box office operations.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Management should evaluate and strengthen internal controls in box office operations.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

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3. RAINBOW COMPANY TICKET SALES

CRITERIA:

- Proper controls with ticket sales help ensure accurate accounting for ticket revenue.

CONDITION:



- The Rainbow Company is staffed with four city employees who are responsible for programming the children's theatre and handling performance ticket sales.
- Our review of ticket sales for Rainbow Company identified the following control deficiencies:
 - 38 of the 109 season ticket order forms did not have the total amount collected or the date the funds were collected.
 - No checks or balances exist to determine if season ticket holders are purchasing tickets at the correct price category (senior citizen, adult, child).
 - Internal forms used to record tickets sold at the door were incomplete and inaccurate.
 - Ticket revenues could not be reconciled to deposits.

EFFECT:

- Potential loss of ticket sales revenue.

CAUSE:

- Lack of formal written procedures to account for ticket sales revenues.
- Inattention to detail on the internal forms.
- Deficient design of deposit slip as various categories of revenues are combined.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Information on season ticket forms should be verified and the form should be dated and include the total amount collected.
2. Deposit forms should be adjusted to allow recording various categories of revenues collected (e.g., season tickets, tickets sold at the door).

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE: See page 17

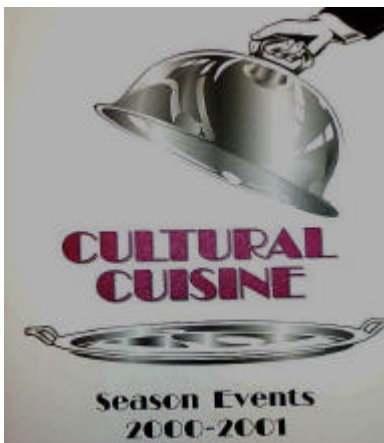
4. PROGRAM AND EVENT EVALUATIONS

CRITERIA:

- Timely evaluation of programs and events provides valuable information for planning future programs.

CONDITION:

- The Cultural Division offers more than 150 cultural programs and events annually.



- According to the Division Manager, once a program or event is complete, the coordinator is required to conduct an evaluation meeting and complete an Event Review form to provide feedback regarding event promotion, quality, and costs.
 - Once completed by the coordinator, the Event Review form is forwarded to a supervisor for additional comments and then to the manager for final review.
-
- We obtained the event review file from the Division Manager and analyzed all the Event Review forms related to the cultural events during 2000. Our analysis indicated the following:
 - Only 20 of 152 events were evaluated and submitted to the manager for review.
 - 17 of the 20 completed Event Review forms were submitted by the Charleston Heights Arts Center Coordinator.
 - Only one Event Review form was submitted by the Reed Whipple Cultural Center Coordinator.
 - 8 of the 20 Event Review forms were submitted more than one month after the program or event.

EFFECT:

- Without timely evaluation of programs and events, management is unable to make timely adjustments to current programs or make informed decisions regarding future programs.

CAUSE:

- Management has not established deadlines for staff to submit Event Review forms.

- Programming staff are not held accountable if they fail to submit Event Review forms to management.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Cultural Division Manager should establish, document, and communicate deadlines for submission of Event Review forms.
2. The Cultural Division Manager should establish procedures to ensure all cultural programs and events are evaluated prior to the established deadlines.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE: See pages 17-18

5. CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

CRITERIA:

- Customer feedback provides valuable information to determine whether the needs of customers are being met.

CONDITION:

- In July 2000, Leisure Services began using comment cards to gather feedback from its customers. The comment cards are available at all three of the City's cultural/arts centers. Customers can return the comment cards to staff, drop them in a comment box, or mail them to Leisure Services.
- A Leisure Services staff inputs customer comments into a database and produces quarterly customer service reports. These reports are distributed to supervisory staff for their review.
- The cultural/arts center staff are responsible for retrieving comment cards from the comment boxes. As such, staff could dispose of negative comments about their operations before submitting the cards for input.
- We reviewed the Division's three quarterly reports and the corresponding comment cards gathered from July 2000 to March 2001. Our analysis indicated the following:
 - While the quarterly reports show that 405 comment cards were received and inputted, we were only able to account for 309 cards. According to the comment cards, most of the customers were satisfied with customer service, facility, equipment, value, and overall experience.
 - We identified that 55 (or 18%) of the 309 cards were mailed-in.
 - Almost half (26 out of 55) of the mailed-in comment cards indicated that the customers were not satisfied.

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EFFECT:

- Management may not receive all customer comments, especially the negative ones.
- Management may not be reviewing an accurate assessment of a program/event.

CAUSE:

- Cultural center staff have access to comment boxes.
- Customers must pay postage for mailing comment cards to Leisure Services.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Cultural center staff should not be permitted to handle or review customer comment cards before the information from the cards has been inputted.
2. Management should evaluate and document additional methods to encourage customer feedback (e.g., postage free comment cards, internet web page, etc.)

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

See page 18

6. CULTURAL CENTERS OPERATING HOURS

CRITERIA:

- Facilities should be open during periods of high demand.

CONDITION:

- Charleston Heights Arts Center (C) and Reed Whipple Cultural Center (R) are open 54 hours each week:

Monday & Thursday:	1 pm - 9 pm
Tuesday & Wednesday:	10 am - 9 pm
Friday:	10 am - 6 pm
Saturday:	9 am - 5 pm



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- In addition to the above hours, West Las Vegas Arts Center (W) also opens 4 hours on Sunday from 1 pm to 5 pm.

HOURS	9 am	10 am	11 am	Noon	1 pm	2 pm	3 pm	4 pm	5 pm	6 pm	7 pm	8 pm
Monday					C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W
Tuesday		C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W
Wednesday		C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W
Thursday					C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W
Friday		C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W			
Saturday	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W	C,R,W				
Sunday					W	W	W	W				

- Many cultural and arts centers in other cities are open to the public during hours when most residents have time to participate in leisure activities (e.g., weekends, evenings).
- The City's cultural and arts centers shorten their operating hours during the weekend.

EFFECT:

- The City's cultural and arts centers are not being utilized to optimize their use by City residents.

CAUSE:

- Due to financial constraints, the cultural and arts centers limit their hours of operation.
- The Cultural Division has not evaluated the optimal hours of operation for the cultural and arts centers.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Cultural Division should conduct a user needs assessment to determine the optimal hours of operation to maximize the public's use of the arts and cultural centers.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

See page 18

7. ART GALLERY ATTENDANCE**CRITERIA:**

- Reliable and accurate attendance statistics allow management to make informed decisions.

CONDITION:

- The City has art galleries at both the Charleston Heights Arts Center and the Reed Whipple Cultural Center.



- Each exhibition in the art gallery is typically displayed over an eight-week period.
- At the entrance to each of the City's two art galleries there is a register for visitors to record their names, comments, and dates of visit.
- Our review of the registers over the past five years indicated that approximately 1,200 visitors registered their visits to the galleries annually – an average of two registered visitors per day per gallery.

Art Gallery Attendance	Charleston Heights Arts Center	Reed Whipple Cultural Center	Total Registered Visitors
Annual Average	661	552	1,213
Daily Average	2	2	4

- However, the Division reported over the past two years an average of approximately 44,000 people visit the City's two art galleries annually as shown in the following table:

Art Gallery Attendance	Charleston Heights Arts Center	Reed Whipple Cultural Center	Total Estimated Attendance
Annual Average	27,225	16,956	44,181
Daily Average	88	55	143

- According to the Center Coordinators, the art gallery attendance statistics were estimates based on the number of people using the centers each day.
- Our review of the Division's annual attendance statistics for the art galleries indicated that the reported attendance was significantly inflated due to double counting of visitors and unrealistic estimations of attendance. Charleston Heights Arts Center assumed an average of 77% of visitors to the center would visit the art gallery.

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EFFECT:

- Inappropriate programming decisions could be made based on inaccurate attendance statistics.

CAUSE:

- Management has not developed and formalized a sound methodology to track attendance at the art galleries.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Cultural Division management should develop a more accurate methodology for tracking art gallery attendance and use this information to more effectively evaluate programming.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE: See page 19

8. SPECIAL EVENT CONTRACTS

CRITERIA:

- Proper monitoring of a contract is essential to ensure compliance with the contract terms and conditions.

CONDITION:

- The Special Event Unit of the Cultural Division (the Unit) is responsible for coordinating and monitoring various special events including the annual Cinco de Mayo Celebration at Freedom Park and the weekly Farmers Market at Bruce Trent Park.
- According to the Unit, approximately 200,000 people attended various festivals and outdoor events in the City during fiscal year 2000.
- Financial arrangements and other contractual obligations related to each event are stipulated in an agreement with the respective promoter.
- The Special Event Unit previously had five staff. However, due to recent attrition and the City's hiring freeze, the Unit only has two staff left to provide support for special events.
- Our review indicated that some contracts were not properly monitored. For example:
 - The promoter for an outdoor event failed to comply with many terms of the rental agreement and underpaid the City more than \$10,000.
 - Another promoter allowed unlicensed businesses to operate during the Farmers Market. During one site inspection, we found 11 of the 21 vendors were operating without a business license.

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EFFECT:

- Potential loss of revenue.

CAUSE:

- Insufficient staff and inadequate controls for handling special events.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Cultural Division management should improve current controls and establish written procedures for monitoring special events.
2. Cultural Division management should assign sufficient staff to handle special events.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

See pages 19-20

9. USE OF VOLUNTEERS

CRITERIA:

- A well-organized volunteer program can be effective in increasing participation in programs and reducing programming costs.

CONDITION:

- Although users are required to pay an admission fee to participate in many of the cultural programs, the fees are usually insufficient to cover the full costs of the programs.
- Volunteers are involved periodically in some of the Division's programs. Most of them are involved through their affiliation with and participation in events organized or sponsored by their communities or groups.
- The Charleston Heights Arts Center has a small number of volunteers who occasionally offer their assistance in their favorite programs held at the center. In return, the Center Coordinator allows the volunteers to participate in the programs for free.
- Currently, the Cultural Division does not have a formal volunteer program to encourage the help of volunteers.

EFFECT:

- The Cultural Division is not taking full advantage of volunteer resources to reduce costs.

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CAUSE:

- Cultural Division management have not adequately considered the benefits of a formal volunteer program.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Cultural Division management should identify and document non-essential tasks that could be performed by volunteers.
2. Cultural Division management should establish a formal volunteer program and actively promote it.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

See page 20

10. CLASS SYSTEM

CRITERIA:

- Proper systems development methodology includes user input and addresses user concerns related to functionality.

CONDITION:

- Leisure Services is implementing the CLASS system to support program, facility, and cash management.
- Users are not familiar with the functionality and reporting capabilities of the system.
- According to Cultural Division staff, the CLASS system is not meeting the needs of the users.

EFFECT:

- Employees are less efficient and unable to obtain necessary information.
- Funds are not always allocated to the correct account.

CAUSE:

- User training has been limited.
- The CLASS system has not been fully implemented.

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. Cultural Division should work with Information Technologies to address employee concerns related to CLASS system functionality, setup, and training.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

See page 20

ATTACHMENT 1

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSES
TO AUDIT OF
CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS DIVISION**

1. COST RECOVERY

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: The Cultural Division will work to establish cost recovery targets for the Division by utilizing applicable data and the Community Needs Assessment Report, which is now available.

Timetable: January 1, 2002

RECOMMENDATION 2

Management Plan of Action: The Event Review forms will be revised to reflect a more accurate account of each program through the tracking of staff time spent on each event.

Timetable: January 1, 2002

RECOMMENDATION 3

Management Plan of Action:

- (a) Trend spotting will be facilitated with the use of the Event Review forms.
- (b) With the data retrieved and assimilated on the Event Review forms, a clearer picture of which programs could withstand a fee increase will unfold.
- (c) Grant applications will continue to be written by Cultural Division Staff. Staff will also continue to seek funding support from the community; increasing their efforts wherever possible.
- (d) Publicity unit will continue to investigate the electronic media for inexpensive avenues that reach a wide audience. Cultural cross promoting will be expected wherever possible and keeping abreast of national marketing trends will be required.
- (e) The Cultural Division's Acting Manager is in the process of taking an in-depth look at how the whole Division operates with an eye towards tightening efficiency standards.
- (f) Utilizing an increased number of volunteers is addressed under recommendation number nine.

Timetable: November 2002.

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2. BOX OFFICE CASH CONTROLS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: Box Office procedures are being revised to accommodate the new Class system.

Timetable: Completion of revised box office procedures/policies will be February 1, 2002.

3. RAINBOW COMPANY TICKET SALES

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: The season ticket order form will be redesigned to indicate the information required for cash handling and processing.

Timetable: Completion by February 1, 2002.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Management Plan of Action: Rainbow Company staff will be required to complete Box Office Report forms currently in existence.

Timetable: December 1, 2001

4. PROGRAM AND EVENT EVALUATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: The Cultural Division Manager will establish a one-week deadline after date of event to have Event Review form submitted for review by Supervisor. This procedure will be communicated to all programming staff via a memo from the manager.

Timetable: January 1, 2002

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RECOMMENDATION 2

Management Plan of Action: All Event Review forms will be submitted with evaluations by programming staff and Supervisors within the one-week deadline. Final review and initialing by Manager will follow within 24 hours and a copy returned to be inserted in the programming file before it can be closed.

Timetable: January 1, 2002

5. CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: Center Coordinators have been instructed to send all keys to the comment boxes to the Division Office Supervisor.

Timetable: Completed.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Management Plan of Action: Division staff will work with IT and Marketing to develop alternative means to collect customer feedback.

Timetable: Completion by March 2002.

6. CULTURAL CENTERS OPERATING HOURS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: A survey will be conducted to determine the hours and days patrons would use and/or attend events at the Cultural Division facilities. Additional survey forms will be available at all Cultural Division facilities for patrons to fill out.

Timetable: Surveys will be mailed out the last week of December and will allow for one month's time for responses to be returned to the Cultural Division. Survey forms will be available at the facilities for patrons to fill out from mid-November through the end of January.

The results of this survey and recommendations for any revision of Cultural Center operating hours are expected to be available by January 31, 2002.

7. ART GALLERY ATTENDANCE

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: The Visual Arts Unit and Technical Unit are investigating various methodologies on tracking gallery attendance in a more accurate manner. Various methodologies include but are not limited to technological devices such as electronic counters, the possibility of a volunteer gallery sitter.

Timetable: March 2002

8. SPECIAL EVENT CONTRACTS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: The following areas are in development, awaiting management's final approval:

- Special Events Guidelines for public consumption
- Checklist sheet (contract due dates for paid fees)
- Contract revisions
- Utilization of Department Master Calendar including park reservation calendars
- Form to track fees based on attendance utilizing ticket sales and turnstiles. This form will include beverage sales which are monitored by inventory.
- Formula to track food sales will be implemented
- A Farmers Market Ordinance requiring each vendor to have license.

Timetable:

- The Special Events Guidelines have been proposed. Completion by December 2001.
- The checklist (Contract Due Dates for Paid Fees) was developed in September 2001, and has been revised in October 2001 from test usages. Completion by December 2001.
- A draft version of the simplified contract is currently being reviewed and then it will be sent to the City Attorney's office for review and approval. Completion by December 2001.
- Department Master Calendar – this is currently being done with each Special Event. Done and in use.
- Park Reservation Calendar – this is currently being done with each Special Event. Done and in use.
- Special Events staff has included in all contracts that the promoter use sequential numbered tickets and a ticket manifest is part of the ticket count. Turnstiles are now in use by Special Events staff. This information is put on a form for tracking and includes beverages that are currently being counted prior to the event and again at the end of the day. Done and in use.

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- The food sales information is being reviewed and a percentage determined. Completion by December 2001.
- Special Events staff will check the vendors with the Farmers Market promoter each week to insure all have their business license. Ongoing.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Management Plan of Action: Currently, two part-time staff people have been hired to assist the Special Events Unit.

Timetable: The first staff person began work on October 17, 2001, and the second began work on October 20, 2001.

9. USE OF VOLUNTEERS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: Management will appoint a committee to review functions throughout the Cultural Division that could utilize a volunteer. .

Timetable: Identification of non-essential tasks and recommendations for a volunteer program will be completed by April 2002.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Management Plan of Action: Upon completion of recommendations by a division task force, a formal volunteer program may be instituted beyond what already is being utilized. Guidelines will be established through Human Resources.

Timetable: Anticipated completion will be May 2002.

10. CLASS SYSTEM

RECOMMENDATION 1

Management Plan of Action: Two of the three Cultural Centers are fully online with the Class software program and the third will be shortly. Full implementation and access by the public using either touch-tone or online registration will be in place by January 1, 2002.

Timetable: Full implementation by January 2002.